(a) whether Government have decided to launch a pilot project to lay a cable network for facilitation of doordarshan viewers n North-Eastern States of the country.

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith likely expenditure on the project; and

(c) by when work on the pilot project is likely to be taken up?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (c) The Government has approved, in principle, the implementation of a special package of schemes for improvement of doordarshan and AIR services in the North-East Region (including Sikkim), to be implemented in the 10th Five Year Plan. The size and nature of the schemes will depend upon the approval by the Expenditure Finance Committee and advance action will start during the current financial year.

Clearance of Harmonium by Doordarshan

839. DR. RAJA RAMANNA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Harmonium has been cleared for performance by All India Radio but it has not been cleared by Doordarshan;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government propose to remove this discrimination; and

(d) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (d) Prasar Bharati has complete independence in programme matters and the Government does not interefere in them. Programme decisions are taken by AIR and DD, separately and independently. Doordarshan has informed that in all the programmes recorded/ telecast, whether instrumental or vocal, Hindustani or Carnatic, Harmonium is used as an accompanying instrument.

Leasing of towers by Air to FM Operators

840. SHRI RUMANDALA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to allow the All India Radio to lease out its towers to private FM operators;